REMARKS

Claims remaining in the present application are Claims 1-28. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended. Claim 3 has been canceled. No new matter has been added as a result of these amendments.

CLAIM OBJECTION

Claim 5 was objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being substantially duplicate of Claim 3. In response to this objection, Claim 3 has been canceled. Therefore, it is believed that this objection has been overcome.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-8 and 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by Morgenthaler, U.S. Pat. No. 6,310,609 (hereinafter Morgenthaler). The rejection is respectfully traversed. It is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-8 and 12-13 are neither taught nor suggested by Morgenthaler.

Currently amended independent Claim 1 recites:

> A palmtop computer system comprising a processor, a memory unit, and a plurality of illuminatable hard buttons controlled by said processor, wherein a plurality of functions are associated with each of said hard buttons, said memory units coupled to said processor and including instructions that, when executed by said processor, selectively illuminated ~~ones~~ a particular hard button of said hard buttons to convey information to a user in response to the execution of a particular function associated with said particular hard button ~~that relates to a function that is performed when said hard button is pressed~~.

Claim 1 recites that "a plurality of functions are associated with each of said hard buttons." Claim 1 further recites that "a particular hard button" is selectively illuminated "to convey information to a user in response to the execution of a particular function

associated with said particular hard button." The cited reference fails to teach or suggest these claimed limitations as discussed below.

For example, in the abstract Morgenthaler teaches, "The user interface includes a means for identifying the appropriate keys on the keypad which correspond to the step or steps required to activate a desired operation to be performed within the device." Further in the abstract, Morgenthaler teaches, "...highlighting the keys to be pressed for operation of the desired function." Similarly, at Col. 5, lines 42-47, Morgenthaler teaches,

> By selectively illuminating one or more of the light sources, the associated key will be identified to the user. By illuminating only those keys which provide valid responses for any given operation, the operator is guided through the proper operation of the telephone without referring to the written manual or user's guide.

Note, Morgenthaler teaches associating one function with each key (e.g., the function that is performed when the user presses an individual key) and highlighting the keys to let a user know which keys may be pressed next.

Thus, Morgenthaler does not teach or suggestion associating "a plurality of functions...with each of said hard buttons" let alone selectively illuminating "a particular hard button of said hard buttons to convey information to a user in response to the execution of a particular function," as Claim 1 recites.

For the foregoing rationale, the limitations of Claim 1 are neither taught nor suggested by Morgenthaler. As such, allowance of Claim 1 is respectfully solicited.

In addition claims that depend on Claim 1 recite features which separately make them patentable. For example, Claim 2 recites, "A palmtop computer system as described in Claim 1 wherein each of said hard buttons includes a contoured region

in the shape of a symbol that represents a primary function that is performed when said hard button is pressed." Morgenthaler does not teach or suggestion such a feature.

In yet another example, Claim 4 recites, "A palmtop computer system as described in Claim 1 wherein the illumination of said hard buttons is programmable." In contrast, Morgenthaler teaches in the abstract, "The user interface includes a means for identifying the appropriate keys on the keypad which correspond to the step or steps required to activate a desired operation to be performed within the device." Similarly, at Col. 5, lines 42-47, Morgenthaler teaches,

> By selectively illuminating one or more of the light sources, the associated key will be identified to the user. By illuminating only those keys which provide valid responses for any given operation, the operator is guided through the proper operation of the telephone without referring to the written manual or user's guide.

For example, in the previously cited portion (e.g., col. 5, lines 42-47) Morgenthaler teaches that if the user presses key a and pressing key c would be the appropriate next step, then key c would be highlighted after the user presses key a. This is not programming the illumination of hard buttons, as recited by Claim 4.

Claims 2-5 depend on Claim 1, which is believed to be allowable for the foregoing rationale. As such, it is respectfully asserted that the rejections of Claims 2-5 have been overcome and their allowance is earnestly solicited.

Currently independent Claim 6 recites:

In a palmtop computer system, a method for conveying information to a user comprising the steps of:

a) providing a hard button that is operable to perform a primary function, said hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said primary function;

b) providing at least one light source, said light source located such that, when said light source is illuminated, light is emitted through said contoured region so as to illuminate said hard button; and

c) selectively illuminating said hard button to communicate information to a user of said palmtop computer system that relates to a function that is performed when said hard button is pressed.

Claim 6 recites "providing a hard button that is operable to perform a primary function, said hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said primary function."

Note, that Morgenthaler does not teach hard buttons with contoured regions, therefore, Morgenthaler does not teach or suggest the limitation, "providing a hard button that is operable to perform a primary function, said hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said primary function," as Claim 6 recites. Additionally, the office action did not recite a specific portion of Morgenthaler that teaches or suggests the limitations of Claim 6 previously cited in this paragraph.

For the foregoing rationale, the limitations of Claim 6 are neither taught nor suggested by Morgenthaler. As such, allowance of Claim 6 is respectfully solicited.

Claims 7, 8 and 12-18 depend on Claim 6, which is believed to be allowable for the foregoing rationale. As such, it is respectfully asserted that the rejections of Claims 7, 8 and 12-18 have been overcome and their allowance is earnestly solicited.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 4, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by Giannuzzi, U.S. Pat. No. 3,911,424 (hereinafter Giannuzzi). The rejection is respectfully

traversed. It is respectfully submitted that Claims 1, 4, and 6 are neither taught nor suggested by Giannuzzi.

Currently amended independent Claim 1 recites:

> A palmtop computer system comprising a processor, a memory unit, and a plurality of illuminatable hard buttons controlled by said processor, wherein a plurality of functions are associated with each of said hard buttons, said memory units coupled to said processor and including instructions that, when executed by said processor, selectively illuminated ~~ones~~ a particular hard button of said hard buttons to convey information to a user in response to the execution of a particular function associated with said particular hard button ~~that relates to a function that is performed when said hard button is pressed~~.

Claim 1 recites that "a plurality of functions are associated with each of said hard buttons." Claim 1 further recites that "a particular hard button" is selectively illuminated "to convey information to a user in response to the execution of a particular function associated with said particular hard button." The cited reference fails to teach or suggest these claimed limitations as discussed below.

For example, at col. 3, lines 19-25, Giannuzzi states,

> As previously stated, it is a feature of this invention to provide a direct indication of the specific steps of the program keyed into storage when a program is being checked by operation of DISPLAY key 21. For this purpose, the keyboard case 19 is provided with plural key indicator lights 31 which when lighted identify the specific program parameter put into storage.

Note, Giannuzzi teaches associating only one function with each key and highlighting keys when a "...specific program parameter is put into storage." Thus, Giannuzzi does not teach or suggest associating "a plurality of functions...with each of said hard buttons" let alone selectively illuminating "a particular hard button of said hard buttons to convey information to a user in response to the execution of a particular function," as Claim 1 recites.

For the foregoing rationale, the limitations of Claim 1 are neither taught nor suggested by Giannuzzi. As such, allowance of Claim 1 is respectfully solicited.

In addition claims that depend on Claim 1 recite features which separately make them patentable. For example, Claim 4 recites, "A palmtop computer system as described in Claim 1 wherein the illumination of said hard buttons is programmable." In contrast, Guinnuzzi teaches at col. 3, lines 22 to 25, "For this purpose, the keyboard case 10 is provided with plural key indicator lights 31 which when lighted identify the specific program parameter put into storage." This is not programming the illumination of hard buttons, as recited by Claim 4.

Claim 4 depends on Claim 1, which is believed to be allowable for the foregoing rationale. As such, it is respectfully asserted that the rejection of Claim 4 has been overcome and its allowance is earnestly solicited.

Currently independent Claim 6 recites:
In a palmtop computer system, a method for conveying information to a user comprising the steps of:

a) providing a hard button that is operable to perform a primary function, said hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said primary function;

b) providing at least one light source, said light source located such that, when said light source is illuminated, light is emitted through said contoured region so as to illuminate said hard button; and

c) selectively illuminating said hard button to communicate information to a user of said palmtop computer system that relates to a function that is performed when said hard button is pressed.

Claim 6 recites "providing a hard button that is operable to perform a primary function, said hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said primary function."

The cited reference fail to teach or suggest these claimed limitations as discussed below. For example, at col. 3, lines 19-25, Giannuzzi states,

> As previously stated, it is a feature of this invention to provide a direct indication of the specific steps of the program keyed into storage when a program is being checked by operation of DISPLAY key 21. For this purpose, the keyboard case 19 is provided with plural key indicator lights 31 which when lighted identify the specific program parameter put into storage.

To the best of Applicants' knowledge, Giannuzzi also does not teach hard buttons with contoured regions. Additionally, the rejection did not recite a specific portion of Giannuzzi that teaches or suggests hard buttons with contoured regions. Therefore, Giannuzzi does not teach or suggest "said hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said primary function," as Claim 6 recites.

For the foregoing rationale, the limitations of Claim 6 are neither taught nor suggested by Giannuzzi. As such, allowance of Claim 6 is respectfully solicited.

CLAIM REJECTIONS
35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 2, 3, 5 and 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Giannuzzi in view of Muurinen, U.S. Pat. No. 5, 408,060 (hereinafter Muurinen). The rejection is respectfully traversed. It is respectfully submitted that Claims 2, 3, 5, and 7-8 are neither taught nor suggested by Giannuzzi, or Muurinen, alone or in combination.

As already argued herein, Giannuzzi does not teach or suggest Claims 1 upon which Claims 2, 3, 5 depend.

Further, the cited combination also fails to teach or suggest the limitations of Claim 1 because Muurinen fails to remedy the deficiency in Giannuzzi in that Muurinen fails to teach or suggest, "a plurality of functions are associated with each of said hard buttons" and "selectively illuminating a particular hard button ... to convey information to a user in response to the execution of a particular function associated with said particular hard button," as recited by Claim 1.

For the foregoing rationale, the limitations of Claim 1 are neither taught nor suggested by Giannuzzi or Muurinen, alone or in combination. As such, allowance of Claim 1 is respectfully solicited.

Claims 2, 3, and 5 depend on Claim 1, which is believed to be allowable for the foregoing rationale. As such, it is respectfully asserted that the rejections of Claims 2, 3, and 5 have been overcome and their allowance is earnestly solicited.

As already argued herein, Giannuzzi does not teach or suggest Claim 6 upon which Claims 7-8 depend.

Further, the cited combination fails to teach or suggest the limitations of Claim 6 because Giannuzzi fails to remedy the deficiency in Giannuzzi in that Muurinen fails to teach or suggest, "providing a hard button that is operable to perform a primary function, said hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said primary function," as Claim 6 recites.

For the foregoing rationale, the limitations of Claim 6 are neither taught nor suggested by Giannuzzi or Muurinen, alone or in combination. As such, allowance of Claim 6 is respectfully solicited.

Claims 7 and 8 depend on Claim 6, which is believed to be allowable for the foregoing rationale. As such, it is respectfully asserted that the rejection of Claims 7 and 8 has been overcome and their allowance is earnestly solicited.

CLAIM REJECTIONS
35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 9-10 and 14-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Detlef, U.S. Pat. No. 6,178,403 (hereinafter Detlef) in view of Chow, U.S. Pat. No. 6,339,374 (hereinafter Chow) and further in view of Morgenthaler. The rejection is respectfully traversed. It is respectfully submitted that Claims 9-10 and 14-28 are neither taught nor suggested by Detlef, Chow or Morgenthaler, alone or in combination.

Currently independent Claim 6 recites:
In a palmtop computer system, a method for conveying information to a user comprising the steps of:
a) providing a hard button that is operable to perform a primary function, said hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said primary function;
b) providing at least one light source, said light source located such that, when said light source is illuminated, light is emitted through said contoured region so as to illuminate said hard button; and
c) selectively illuminating said hard button to communicate information to a user of said palmtop computer system that relates to a function that is performed when said hard button is pressed.

Claim 6 recites "providing a hard button that is operable to perform a primary function, said hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said primary function."

Note, that Detlef does not teach hard buttons with contoured regions, therefore, Detlef does not teach or suggest the limitation, "providing a hard button that is operable to

perform a primary function, said hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said primary function," as Claim 6 recites. Additionally, the office action did not recite a specific portion of Detlef that teaches or suggests the limitation of Claim 6 previously cited in this paragraph.

Further, the cited combination also fails to teach or suggestion the limitations of Claim 6 because Chow and Morgenthaler fail to remedy the deficiency in Detlef in that Chow and Morgenthaler fail to teach or suggest the limitations, "providing a hard button that is operable to perform a primary function, said hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said primary function," as Claim 6 recites.

For the foregoing rationale, the limitations of Claim 6 are neither taught nor suggested by Detlef, Chow, or Morgenthaler , alone or in combination.

Claims 9-10 and 14-18 depend on Claim 6 and therefore include the limitations of Claim 6. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 9-10 and 14-18 are allowable for the same reasons that Claim 6 should be allowable. As such, allowance of Claims 9-10 and 14-18 is respectfully solicited.

Currently independent Claim 19 recites:
In a palmtop computer system, a method for conveying information to a user comprising the steps of:
a) providing a first hard button that is operable to initiate operation of a date book application, said first hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said date book application;
b) illuminating said contoured region of said a first hard button when a date book alert occurs;
c) providing a second hard button that is operable to initiate operation of an address book application, said second hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said address book publication;
d) illuminating said the contoured region of said second hard button when a call is missed;

e) providing a third hard button that is operable to initiate operation of a to-do application that generates a to-do list, said third hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said to-do application; and

f) illuminating said third hard button when a due date for an item on said to-do list has passed.

Claim 19 recites "providing a first hard button that is operable to initiate operation of a date book application, said first hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said date book application."

Note, Detlef does not teach hard buttons that have contoured regions, let alone hard buttons that have contoured regions in the shape of a symbol that represents a function, such as a date book application, an address book application, or a to-do list application. Thus, Detlef does not teach or suggest the limitation, "providing a first hard button that is operable to initiate operation of a date book application, said first hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said date book," as Claim 19 recites, let alone all of the other limitations that Claim 19 recites.

Further, the cited combination also fails to teach or suggestion the limitations of Claim 19 because Chow and Morgenthaler fail to remedy the deficiency in Detlef in that Chow and Morgenthaler fail to teach or suggest the limitation, "providing a first hard button that is operable to initiate operation of a date book application, said first hard button having a contoured region formed therein that is contoured in the shape of a symbol that represents said date book," as Claim 19 recites, as well as all of the other limitations that Claim 19 recites.

For the foregoing rationale, the limitations of Claim 19 are neither taught nor suggested by Detlef, Chow, or Morgenthaler , alone or in combination.

Claims 20-28 depend on Claim 19 and therefore include the limitations of Claim 19. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 20-28 are allowable for the same reasons that Claim 19 should be allowable. As such, allowance of Claims 20-28 is respectfully solicited.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above listed amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejected Claims is requested. Based on the amendments and arguments presented above, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-28 overcome the rejections of record. Therefore, allowance of Claims 1-28 is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner have a question regarding the instant response, the Applicant invites the Examiner to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
WAGNER, MURABITO & HAO LLP

Dated: Jan 13, 2004

Cheryl A. Eichstaedt
Registration No. 51,761

Address: WAGNER, MURABITO & HAO LLP
Two North Market Street
Third Floor
San Jose, California 95113

Telephone: (408) 938-9060 Voice
(408) 938-9069 Facsimile